

Message Text

SECRET

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DRAFTED BY PM/ISP:JHHAWES:DLJ
APPROVED BY PM - DAVID C. GOMPERT
EUR/RPM - MR. LEDOGAR
ACDA - MR. FISHER

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O 302336Z JUN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 167307

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO, PARM

SUBJECT: UK PROPOSALS ON ARMS CONTROL DISCUSSIONS IN NATO
AND THEATER SYSTEMS

1. PM DEPUTY DIRECTOR GOMPERT AND EUR/RPM DIRECTOR LEDOGAR
MET WITH UK EMBOFF REEVE JUNE 30 TO DISCUSS UK THINKING ON
FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN'S PROPOSAL TO ENHANCE NATO CONSUL-
TATIONS ON ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT. REEVE INDICATED
THAT WHAT THE UK APPEARED TO HAVE IN MIND, ACCORDING TO
UK MISSION IN BRUSSELS, WAS NOT A NEW CONSULTATIVE BODY,
BUT GREATER USE OF THE SPC FOR DISCUSSION OF ARMS CONTROL
TOPICS. THEY WOULD PROPOSE TO RENAME THE SPC AS THE
"ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT COMMITTEE" WHEN MEETING ON
THOSE SUBJECTS; THIS WOULD HAVE NO POLICY SIGNIFICANCE,
BUT MIGHT, THEY FELT, HAVE PRESENTATIONAL ADVANTAGES. IN
ADDITION, UK WOULD HOLD THE REGULAR NATO DISARMAMENT
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EXPERTS MEETINGS UNDER THIS SPC FRAMEWORK RATHER THAN
POLADS. UK WOULD ALSO ENLARGE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF
EXISTING MBFR WORKING GROUP TO ENABLE THEM TO ACCEPT MAN-
DATES ON OTHER SPECIFIC ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT
QUESTIONS OF CONCERN TO THE ALLIANCE. THE UK WOULD NOT
EXPAND THE STAFF OF THE DISARMAMENT AND ARMS CONTROL
SECTION OF THE NATO INTERNATIONAL STAFF POLITICAL DIVISION.

2. LEDOGAR INDICATED THAT AS A GENERAL PRINCIPLE AND WITHOUT SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO SALT AND THEATER NUCLEAR SYSTEMS

THE US WELCOMED IMPROVED NATO CONSULTATIONS ON ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT MATTERS. HE NOTED WE SAW NO NEED FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW CONSULTATIVE MECHANISMS IN NATO. THE SPC HAD PROVEN ITSELF TO BE A PARTICULARLY FLEXIBLE CONSULTATIVE BODY, WITH AN ABILITY TO ORIENT ITSELF IN WHATEVER CONFIGURATION WAS APPROPRIATE TO THE PARTICULAR TASK AT HAND.

3. GOMPERT INDICATED THAT WITH REGARD TO THE QUESTION OF THEATER NUCLEAR WEAPONS SYSTEMS AND SALT, WE HAD PARTICULAR CONCERNS WHICH HAD BEEN EXPRESSED DURING THE BILATERAL CONSULTATION JUNE 22. WE WOULD NOT BE IN A POSITION TO CONSIDER CONSULTATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS ON THESE SPECIFIC SUBJECTS UNTIL AFTER WE HAD WORKED FURTHER THROUGH THE SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS IN THE INFORMAL BILATERAL PROCESS WE ENVISAGED FOR THIS FALL. FOR THE PRESENT WE WERE CONCERNED TO AVOID RIGIDITY, AND BELIEVED THAT PREMATURE FORMAL ALLIANCE CONSULTATIONS WOULD NOT PERMIT THE KIND OF OPEN INTERCHANGE WE BELIEVED ESSENTIAL. GOMPERT THEREFORE ASKED THAT, IF THE UK PROPOSALS ON ARMS CONTROL CONSULTATIONS WERE TO MAKE REFERENCE TO THE ISSUES OF THEATER SYSTEMS AND SALT THAT WE BE GIVEN A CHANCE TO COMMENT ON
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THESE IN ADVANCE, AND SUGGESTED THAT THE UK FOCUS ITS PRESENT PROPOSALS PRIMARILY ON OTHER AREAS OF ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT. WE WOULD WANT TO CONSIDER PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS HAND-IN-HAND WITH SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES IN THE BILATERALS THIS FALL, AND IDEAS FOR ALLIANCE CONSULTATIONS MIGHT EMERGE OUT OF THAT PROCESS.

4. FOR USNATO: YOU MAY DRAW ON ABOVE AS APPROPRIATE IF TOPIC ARISES IN CONVERSATION WITH YOUR UK COLLEAGUES.

5. FOR BONN: EMBASSY SHOULD APPROACH APPROPRIATE LEVEL IN FOREIGN OFFICE, NOTE THAT WE HAVE DISCUSSED UK THINKING ON IMPROVING NATO CONSULTATIONS ON ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT, AND DRAW ON ABOVE POINTS, STRESSING OUR DESIRE TO CONSIDER SALT AND THEATER SYSTEMS ISSUES BILATERALLY IN THE FALL BEFORE DETERMINING HOW TO PROCEED ON THE TOPIC IN NATO, AS WE TOLD DISARMAMENT COMMISSIONER RUTH IN WASHINGTON JUNE 26.

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